The third meeting of the Commission of Fine Arts during the fiscal year 1918 was held at its office at 1729 New York Avenue, northwest, Washington, D. C., on Saturday, October 13, 1917.

The following members were present:

Charles Moore, Chairman;

Frederick Law Olmsted;

Herbert Adams;

J. Alden Weir;

Charles A. Platt;

Wm. Mitchell Kendall;

John Russell Pope;

also Colonel C. S. Ridley, the Secretary and Executive Officer.

The Commission was called to order at 9:30 a. m. and immediately proceeded to the business before it.

1. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING: The minutes of the meeting held on September 10, 1917, were approved.

2. NOBLE MEMORIAL: The act permitting the erection of a fountain to Alfred Noble in Washington provides that "the site chosen and the design for the memorial fountain shall be approved by the Commission of Fine Arts". Colonel Harts, as a member of the Alfred Noble Memorial Committee of the American Society of Civil Engineers, asked the criticism of the Commission regarding the full-sized plaster model which had been erected in Rawlins Square. Mr. Adams, as the committee on this matter, reported that he had been in conference with the designers, and had also inspected the model before the

meeting with Mr. Kendall, Mr. Platt, and Mr. Pope. He stated that their impression was that the bulk of the whole fountain composition should be reduced in size, and that the entire composition should be restudied with definite relation to the axis of New York Avenue. He was asked to convey these criticisms to the designers.

3. RAWLINS PARK LANDSCAPE PLAN: Colonel Ridley laid before the Commission three sketch plans for possible treatments of the immediate vicinity of the Noble memorial fountain. The Commission advised that the studying of the landscape treatment of the park in connection with the proposed memorial should be postponed until the design for the memorial itself had been approved.

4. LETTER FROM MUNICIPAL ARCHITECT: Colonel Ridley stated that at the last meeting the Secretary had been directed to call the attention of the District Commissioners to certain alleged statements attacking the Commission of Fine Arts and its work made by the Municipal Architect at the Arts Club dinner held in Washington on the evening of September 6th last. The reply of the District Commissioners conveying Mr. Ashford's version of the occurrence had been received and Colonel Ridley read it to the Commission. Colonel Ridley stated that he had acknowledged receipt of the letter to the District Commissioners with a statement that it would be placed before the Commission at the next meeting. No further action was deemed necessary.

5. SITE FOR ERICSSON MEMORIAL: The question of a site for the Ericsson Memorial had been discussed at preceding meetings. The Chairman said that he had recently seen Mr. Eckberg, the President of the committee of Swedish-Americans interested in this memorial, and had been informed that that committee's efforts to add $25,000 of private funds to the original $35,000

appropriated by Congress for the purpose would probably be accomplished by the middle of October; and that they would probably be before the Commission for a definite decision on a site sometime in November. A discussion followed of possible sites for the memorial including the one insisted upon by the Swedish-American representative across 17th street from the Pan-American Union, and one considered by the Commission as available on the triangle on B Street to the rear of the Pan-American Union building. Later in the day the Commission inspected the last-named site.

6. MALL PLAN: Colonel Ridley informed the Commission that the office of Public Buildings and Grounds had completed a topographical survey of the entire Mall from the foot of Capitol Hill to 17th street West, as well as a grading plan for East and West Seaton Park and Henry Park, and tentative preliminary profiles of the proposed roads and driveways in the Mall scheme according to the Park Commission plan. The Commission were pleased to learn this and inspected the plans with a great deal of interest. Mr. Olmsted was appointed a committee with power in this matter, and went over the plans with Mr. James G. Langdon, consulting landscape architect, and Mr. Charles P. Punchard, landscape architect, of the office of Public Buildings and Grounds. The grading plans were approved, but consideration of the tentative preliminary profiles is being continued by Mr. Olmsted.

7. TEMPORARY OFFICE BUILDING IN THE MALL: The Chairman called the attention of the Commission to the proposed construction of the large temporary office building in the Mall to provide 1,050,000 square feet of office space to house additional activities of the Government brought on by the present war. He explained that the original act provided for construction of one building, but that efforts had been successfully made in having the wording changed

from "building" to "buildings"; and that these buildings when erected would contribute to the development of the Mall. He also read his letter of September 17th to Chairman Fitzgerald of the House Committee on Appropriations which denied that a newspaper report had any basis in fact that the Fine Arts Commission's wrath had been stirred by the proposed erection of the temporary building. This letter is appended hereto as Exhibit "A". Colonel Ridley explained the ground plan and elevation of the proposed building, and later on in the day accompanied the members on an inspection of the site.

8. ENTRANCE TO MONTROSE PARK: Colonel Ridley laid before the Commission a sketch showing the proposed treatment of the entrance to Montrose Park which had been prepared in accordance with previous suggestions. Several other suggestions were made to improve the design, such as the simplification of the outlines of the basin and narrowing of the entrance from 40 feet to 25 feet. The scheme was approved, subject to the carrying out of the modifications indicated. 1-16-32.4.40

9. PUBLIC BUILDINGS COMMISSION: The Chairman pointed out the provision of the act approved July 1, 1916, creating a Public Buildings Commission, which directed that that Commission in the preparation of its report shall avail itself of the advice of the Commission of Fine Arts. The various requirements of the whole act were discussed and some of the problems that would be encountered were gone into in detail.

10. DESIGN FOR NEW ARMY MEDICAL MUSEUM: Colonel Wm. O. Owen, Curator of the Army Medical Museum, had submitted for the opinion of the Commission a front elevation and basement, first, second, and attic floor plan of a proposed new building to house the Army Medical Museum. In discussing the plan Colonel Owen had stated that the design had been prepared to make the building suit-

able for location along the Mall. The general project and location were satisfactory to the Commission, but they stated that the design of the building as presented needs an entire restudy with a view of simplification, and the presentation of a less ornamental and grandiose design.

11. JEREMIAH O'CONNOR: Mr. Jeremiah O'Connor of this city has been endeavoring to gather support for an out-of-door art museum which he is hoping to get Mr. John D. Rockefeller to donate, and has been anxious to get the approval of the Commission for this scheme. A letter that had been sent him as the unofficial opinion of the Commission on May 31st last was stated by him to be unsatisfactory for his purposes, and he had asked for a few moments in which to explain his proposition personally to the Commission. He appeared at 12:30 o'clock. He was later informed in writing that the Commission were much interested in his presentation, but felt that it was unadvisable for them to take official action on any subject not brought before them as provided by law and that they had gone as far as is consistent in their unofficial letter to him.

After a short interval for lunch, some time was spent in going over the scheme for the arrangement of public buildings along the Mall. Later motors were taken for a close inspection of the Mall, and the Lincoln Memorial.

There being no further business to come before the meeting, the Commission adjourned at 5 p. m., subject to the call of the Chairman.

Approved: Charles Moore
Chairman.

Colonel, U. S. Army,
Secretary and Executive Officer.

- COPY -

THE COMMISSION OF FINE ARTS

1729 New York Avenue,

Washington, D.C.

September 17, 1917.

My dear Sir:

I desire to say to you that the inclosed newspaper statement has no basis in fact. The members of the Commission of Fine Arts know that you were one of the most efficient supporters of the McCall bill creating the Commission of Fine Arts, and that you have consistently supported the principles of the Commission, although not always agreeing with its conclusions. They have the highest respect for you personally and for your repeated and consistent efforts for the development of Washington.

The members of the Commission realize the war needs of the Government and desire to do everything in their power to assist in the exacting work now in progress. They have ever exerted themselves to further and never to retard such work. Furthermore, they see in this emergency work opportunities to further the general plan for Washington and their only concern is to conserve all efforts to that end, without in any measure delaying its accomplishment.

Respectfully,

(Signed) Charles Moore,

Chairman.

Hon. John J. Fitzgerald,

House of Representatives, U. S.

- COPY -

THE COMMISSION OF FINE ARTS

1329 New York Avenue,

Washington, D.C.

September 17, 1917.

My dear Sir:

I desire to say to you that the inclosed newspaper statement has no basis in fact. The members of the Commission of Fine Arts know that you were one of the most efficient supporters of the McGoll bill creating the Commission of Fine Arts, and that you have consistently supported the principles of the Commission, although not always agreeing with its conclusions. They have the highest respect for you personally and for your respected and consistent efforts for the development of Washington.

The members of the Commission realize the war needs of the Government and desire to do everything in their power to assist in the speeding work now in progress. They have ever exerted themselves to further and never to retard such work. Furthermore, they see in this emergency work opportunities to further the general plan for Washington and their only concern is to conserve all efforts to that end, without in any measure delaying its accomplishment.

Respectfully,

(Signed) Charles Moore,

Chairman.

Hon. John J. Fitzgerald,

House of Representatives, U. S.

The fourth meeting of the Commission of Fine Arts during the fiscal year 1918 was held at its office at 1729 New York Avenue, northwest, Washington, D. C., on Saturday, October 27, 1917.

The following members were present:

Charles Moore, Chairman;

Frederick Law Olmsted;

Herbert Adams;

Charles A. Platt;

Wm. Mitchell Kendall;

John Russell Pope;

also Colonel C. S. Ridley, U. S. A., the Secretary and Executive Officer.

The Commission was called to order at 9:30 a. m., and immediately proceeded to the business before it.

1. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING: The Minutes of the meeting held on October 13, 1917, were approved.

2. STATUE OF LINCOLN FOR LINCOLN MEMORIAL: Colonel Ridley, as Executive Officer of the Lincoln Memorial Commission, stated that, upon extensive study, Daniel Chester French, sculptor, and Henry Bacon, architect, had found that the originally proposed size of "about ten feet" for the statue of Lincoln for the Lincoln Memorial would have to be increased to 19 feet, or a total height of nearly 31 feet for statue, base and pedestal. The question of the authorization to this size, with incidental changes required in the panelling back of the statue, and, of course, a certain

increase in cost, were shortly to be passed on by the Lincoln Memorial Commission. Colonel Ridley said he would like to have the opinion of the Commission of Fine Arts for the benefit of the Lincoln Memorial Commission at that meeting, and therefore submitted the matter formally. After detailed discussion the Commission recommended that the judgment of the sculptor and the architect be concurred in and that the Lincoln Memorial Commission authorize the increase in size.

3. SITE FOR ERICSSON MEMORIAL ALONG SEVENTEENTH STREET: At the preceding meeting the Commission had studied the possibility of a suitable site for the proposed Ericsson memorial in the area along Seventeenth street south of the State, War and Navy Department, and had requested the Officer in charge of Public Buildings and Grounds to have a number of studies prepared to that effect. These studies had been prepared and were discussed. The Commission later on went over the ground, but left the question open for further discussion at the next meeting when the studies would be ready.

4. MEADE MEMORIAL: At a committee meeting held in New York City on August 30th last, Frank Miles Day, architectural advisor, Grant Simon, architect, and Charles Grafly, sculptor, engaged in designing the Meade Memorial to be located in the Botanic Garden area, had submitted a preliminary sketch model. The composition was circular in form and vertical, and had been approved as such. By appointment these gentlemen appeared at 12:30 before the Commission with a more advanced sketch of the design. Mr. Day, in briefly surveying the work done by them since the last conference, said that the Pennsylvania Commission had held a meeting and

approved the general mass of the monument. The full-size monument is to be 33'-6" high from the ground; the figure of Meade is to be 9 feet high; while the circumference of the drum was figured at 27 feet. The main inquiry now was whether a perfected model should be prepared along the lines of the design under consideration and including all betterments that might be suggested at this time. The Commission advised this, and during the discussion that ensued a number of desirable modifications were pointed out for consideration in the preparation of the model. The model, at a scale of 3/4 inch to the foot, is to be finished in about a month, the understanding being that the suggestions made by the members will be embodied in it.

5. THE PUBLIC BUILDINGS PROJECT: With the exception of a short interval for lunch, the remainder of the session was devoted to a discussion of the project for the housing of all Government activities in Government-owned buildings. Mr. Moore read some notes he had prepared covering a survey of the situation and discussing the various Departments' needs which could be incorporated in whole or in part in the Commission's report when the time came.

So far during the discussions on this subject the following points have been agreed on among the members:

That good and dignified types for Department buildings are the Treasury Department building, the designs for proposed buildings for State, Justice and Commerce and Labor, the Patent Office, the Senate and House Office buildings, and the old Post Office building on 7th street.

That types of buildings to face the Mall and Pennsylvania avenue

on the south side are the George Washington Memorial Hall, the new National Museum, the Department of Agriculture and the Freer Art Gallery.

For heights of Department buildings, it was thought that 5 stories for such buildings as Labor, Justice, and Commerce would be about right.

As regards the office building type, the members felt the main thing was good proportions. While the Winder building has simplicity, and the wall space is good, it has not enough window space; it is not what is wanted but it has the qualities. They felt that buildings which in material as to exterior walls, in cost per cubic foot, and in convenience, lighting, &c, would be closely comparable with the building for the Department of the Interior would be about right, but they would not express approval of that building except perhaps as to cost. The Bureau of Engraving and Printing was considered far ahead of the usual type of manufacturing building. The office building type should be, they felt, between 6 and 7 stories in height, and a little higher from floor to floor than the stories in the Interior Department office building - 13 feet rather than 12 feet.

In the afternoon the members personally inspected the area south of the State, War and Navy Department building along 17th street, and also areas bordering Lafayette Park, the Union Station, the Capitol, and along the Mall, where available sites for proposed Public Buildings are under consideration.

There being no further business to come before the meeting, the Commission adjourned, subject to the call of the Chairman.

Approved: Charles Moore

Colonel, U. S. Army,
SECRETARY AND EXECUTIVE OFFICER.